

## **MOVING OVERSEAS**

### **Post Privileges (Civilians)**

An overseas assignment gives you additional privileges at post facilities. In the Continental United States (CONUS), civilian employees are usually able to use the fitness center, library, and other recreational facilities. Overseas, civilian employees with post privileges are also able to use the Commissary and Post Exchange (PX), including the theaters, gas stations, and auto repair facilities. You must have a Government-issued identification (ID) card to use these facilities. Your Civilian Personnel Advisory Center can give you information on eligibility for ID cards.

### **Identification Cards (Civilians)**

Until you are able to get your new CAC card you may use your PCS orders and your passport for access to the military installation and when using PX, Commissary, Bank and Post Offices on post. To obtain your CAC Card you must first process into the CPAC. The CPAC will issue you a SF 1172 and SF 1173-2. Next you need to setup an appointment at the Military Personnel Division (MPD) 263-4449. Items you must bring with you for your ID card appt: SF 50 (New Position at Camp Zama), birth certificates for you and your family members, marriage certificate, passports, and social security cards. Civilian employees and their authorized family members are issued an ID card different from what you may have had in the Continental United States (CONUS). You and your family should carry your ID card wherever you go.

### **Electricity**

**IMPORTANT!** Average electrical current supplied to most Japanese homes is only 30 to 50 Amps, at 100 volts and 50 cycles. The average home in the U.S. is supplied with at least 100 Amps (usually 150-200), at 120 volts and 60 cycles. Carefully choose the electrical appliances you wish to bring to Japan. Most kitchen appliances will work well enough, but those that depend on clocks or timers will lose approximately 10 minutes per hour. Appliances with motors operate at a slower speed due to the 50 cycle electrical supply, but should continue to serve adequately. A transformer may increase the voltage from 100 to 120, but it WILL NOT adjust the cycles from 50 to 60. If you live on post you will not need a transformer to use your own appliances. Electric clocks are not recommended for shipment to Japan, since they will not keep accurate time on 50 cycle current. Freezers are also not recommended for shipment, since space is limited in quarters.

### **Family Member Employment**

You are coming over here with a job, but what about your spouse? What are the possibilities for her/his employment while you are here? As anywhere, the skills, experience, and desires of your spouse have a lot to do with the likelihood of employment. There are some special complicating factors in an overseas area; however, first and foremost is the supply of family member job seekers versus the number of positions available. There are many more family members than full-time positions. Since employment on the local economy is usually not possible, the competition for on-base jobs is very stiff. Appropriated and Non-Appropriated fund employment opportunities can be found at [www.cpol.army.mil](http://www.cpol.army.mil) under employment.

### **State Income Taxes**

Some states have no income tax, period. Other states don't tax income earned overseas. Many states; however, do expect you to continue to pay state income tax while you are assigned overseas. Your local Legal Office can provide advice on these matters.

### **Banking and Money Exchange**

Due to electronic banking, most of the conveniences of home are available to you on post. You may keep your Continental United States (CONUS) checking account or establish one at the base bank or credit union. Some people keep one in the CONUS and one overseas; just keep in mind the mail delay in deposits made to CONUS banks. Your paycheck has to be electronically deposited and most travel payments and other payments from the government can be electronically transferred, but other deposits may have to be mailed. The ATMs banks and credit unions on base can give you both dollars and Yen currency. You will find you will use cash much more on the economy than you probably did in the CONUS. Although many stores and hotels take credit cards, they are not as commonly accepted as in the US. If you need a check in a currency other than dollars, say to buy furniture, the post bank or credit union can provide one for you for a nominal fee. The post bank can change currency. Generally, you get better exchange rates in the country of the currency so it's often a good idea to wait. It's easy to find currency exchanges, in airports and train stations, banks and offices specifically for money exchange. Depending on where you're going however; how much time you will have - it's always a good idea to get some currency in advance. Whoever is changing your currency is not doing it for free -- avoid buying too much and converting back because you will lose money in the process. It's common advice but still good -- DO NOT exchange money with street moneychangers. There is an excellent chance you will be cheated or worse, they are scam artists, pure and simple.

### **Telephone Service and Long Distance**

On base homes throughout Japan are equipped with Direct Service Network (DSN) phone lines. These lines allow you to call long distance and also to numbers throughout Japan. Billing for this service is automatically deducted from your monthly pay.

Long distance rates for calls to the US vary based on carrier and type of service used (Direct Calling Card). If you plan on calling the US on a regular basis, look into various long distance services available over here. If you have an American cellular phone, you will not be able to use it here -- the frequencies are different from those used here for such service and can interfere with other uses.

### **Newspapers, Television, Radio, and Movies**

Since most of us are not fluent in Japanese, we are dependent on English language media for information and entertainment. If you have come from an area with 100 cable channels, you are going to suffer some withdrawal symptoms. The Stars and Stripes is an English language newspaper published for members of the US Forces, seven days per week. The Stars and Stripes is sold by AAFES bookstores, in machines and on US installations. AFN (American Forces Network) currently offer 9 television channels at no additional cost. AFN tries to address all viewing tastes, with a good variety of network series, TV and other movies, sports, and news. AFN also broadcasts segments of interest to local communities, including weather, exchange rates, community events, and other items. All military installations have video rental outlets. Most military installations also have at least one movie theater.

### **Legal Assistance**

The Legal Assistance Office is available to assist with a wide range of legal matters. Services provided include but are not limited, wills preparation, power of attorney, marriage and divorce procedures, and tax assistance. Appointments are required for most services. To find additional information go to [www.usarj.army.mil/cmdstaffs/sja.aspx](http://www.usarj.army.mil/cmdstaffs/sja.aspx) .